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ABSTRACT

A study examined Nigerian journalists' self-reported perceptions of editorial ethics and of the role of editorials in national development, comparing data with an earlier content analysis of the ethics of newspaper editorials. Subjects, 348 full-time, salaried Nigerian journalists on nine national newspapers in two newspaper ownership groups, private and government, answered a self-administered questionnaire. Results indicated that: (1) the private and government journalists, as newspaper groups, showed more ethical similarities than differences, but between-group differences were not apparent in any of the three overall measures of utilitarian, deontological, and situation ethics; (2) differences in the mean scores of the three measures of ethics for both newspaper groups were clearly consistent with the results of an earlier content-analytical study of the editorial ethics of the newspapers that the sample journalists in the present study represent; and (3) the preference for utilitarian ethics was higher than for deontological and situation ethics. Findings of the study question the implications for national development of the simple, traditional distinction between government and private newspapers in sub-Saharan Africa. (Four notes, seven tables of data, and one figure are included, and 61 references are appended.) (MS)

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Nigerian Journalists' Perceptions of Editorial Ethics and of the Role of Editorials in National Development

ABSTRACT

This study examines self-reported perceptions of editorial ethics and of the role of editorials in national development for a purposive sample of 348 full-time, salaried Nigerian journalists on nine national newspapers in two newspaper ownership groups: private and government. It investigates the extent to which their perceptions of editorial ethics are consistent with the results of an earlier content analysis of the ethics of newspaper editorials.

Results indicate that private and government journalists, as newspaper groups, show more ethical similarities than differences, but between-group differences are not apparent in any of the three overall measures of utilitarian, deontological and situation ethics. Also, differences in the mean scores of the three measures of ethics for both newspaper groups are clearly consistent with the results of an earlier content-analytical study of the editorial ethics of the newspapers that the sample journalists in the present study represent. The preference for utilitarian ethics is higher than those for deontological and situation ethics.

On seven-item comparisons of the role of editorials in national development, significant differences between the two newspaper groups are observed for only two items: editorial support for development goals of governments and editorial speculation about national development.

Finally, because this study indicates that newspaper ownership is occasionally not a factor in the perception of ethical values and of the perceived role of editorials in development, it questions the implications for national development of the simple, traditional distinction between government and private newspapers in sub-Saharan Africa.

Nigerian Journalists' Perceptions of Editorial Ethics and of the Role of Editorials in National Development

Since the early 1960s, when worldwide interest in the contributions of communications to development began to influence the formulation and social status of national-development policies, acrimonious debates have been raging on such issues as the extent to which Third World mass media are susceptible to political control, are agents of government, are independent in their coverage of the "good news" of development, and are effective promoters of national development. The interdependence of the implications of these issues for Third World development makes the role of the Third World press demonstrably related to press freedom (e.g., Edeani, 1985; Edeani, 1970; Nam, 1983; Nam & Oh, 1973), which in turn is influenced more by political than by economic, social or communication variables (Cornejo-de-Villanuerva, 1985). Nam and Oh (1973, p. 749), for example, reported that a "strong commitment to development by the political leadership is not quite compatible with . . . press freedom." Consequently, there is the continuing concern about "the failed efforts to use mass media as the magic multiplier of development efforts" in the Third World (Stevenson, 1988, p. 173) and a growing interest in alternative strategies proposed to avert such failures (e.g., Boafo, 1985; Haule, 1984; Hornik, 1988; Obeng-Quaidoo, 1985; Pratt & Manheim, 1988; Sonaike, 1988).

While the failures of the Third World press in development support have been largely blamed on governments' media policies, on the nature of journalists' professional values, and on governments' actions on the press (e.g., Hachten, 1985), little attention has focused on the importance of press ethics to development and of the relevance, if any, of newspaper ownership

patterns to such ethics. Yet Meiden (1980, p. 8) noted that "Ethics should saturate the whole process of communication and not be regarded as [a] minor aspect of communication."

Even though Nigerian journalists profess to abide by codes of journalistic conduct drawn up by the International Federation of Journalists, the International Press Institute, and by the Nigerian Press Organizations, adherence to such codes has, in reality, been minuscule (Nwosu, 1987). On this lack of adherence to strict ethical standards, Babatope (1987), a member of the editorial board of the National Concord,[1] a private national newspaper in Nigeria, iterated Nwosu's observation:

> News items, which otherwise would have been used with discretion, are freely displayed with total disregard to ethical demands . . . Oaths of confidentiality are recklessly breached, while the knack for adventures and in-depth analysis of events have been thrown overboard (p. 3).

A handful of empirical studies has explored journalistic ethics among U.S. journalists (Anderson, 1987; Bird, 1985; Cherry, 1985; Endres, 1985; Gray & Wilhoit, 1983; Hartley, 1983; Meyer, 1987; Meyer, 1983; Riffe, Sneed, & Van Ommeren, 1988). Anderson (1987), for example, found awareness and concern about journalistic ethics among U.S. daily newspaper editors and reported the editors' involvement in making news staffers cognizant of ethical issues. Additionally, the Society of Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi publishes national surveys on the ethics of its members. Although results of one such survey indicated a wide range of viewpoints on various topics, some clear patterns that emerged included the insistence to censure violators of ethics and the requirement that publishers and station managers adhere to the same ethical standards as those of the journalists they employed.[2]

Cherry's (1985) study of the influences of reference groups on the ethical attitudes of U.S. news editors, publishers and staff members found that the

newspaper function could be influenced and the definition of news could be determined by four significant reference groups; that is, groups whose report cards on the journalist's newspaper should interest the journalist. Four such groups were labeled "promoters," "merchants," "loners" and "champions." Newspaper publishers tended to be both "promoters" and "merchants." "Promoters" wanted a newspaper that had an interest in their economic supporters as well as in journalistic professionalism; "merchants" also reported a high interest in their propective grade from advertisers and potential investors. Editors tended to be "loners" who apparently were "inner-directed," evaluated their work against internal standards, and displayed little interest in the prospective grade of any reference group. Staff members, reporters and sub-editors tended to be "champions" who were highly interested in their prospective grades from journalism school faculties and students, the competition and politicians.

In a similar study designed to identify factors underlying journalists' ethical decisions, Endres (1985) found that U.S. editorial staffers' ethical values were influenced by the newsroom environment, by unwritten and peer-presented ethical codes, and by a day-to-day newsroom socialization experience.

Neither of these studies employed a philosophical approach to the study of ethics, nor did any evaluate ethics on mutually exclusive ethics categories. Empirical studies on sub-Sahara African journalists' ethical judgments, based on an ethics framework, and studies on the journalists' perceptions of editorial role in development have not been conducted. This national study focuses on that gap.

The importance of editorials to a nation's development is underscored by the fact that in general they influence the reader, and provide assistance for making judgments (Hynds, 1984). In the Third World, the print media content

reflects and appeals to the needs and interests of the urban elite and more particularly to those of the government. Given such a crucial target audience, the editorial page, on the one hand, is the logical place for the press's criticisms of government and for its opinions on national issues.

On the other hand, it provides a forum for the discussion of development issues. Windhauser (1973) defined editorials as the opinion columns that reflect a newspaper's views on an issue or event. Oakes (1968, p. 2) described the editorial page as a newspaper's "heart and soul, the one area where the personality and, more important, the philosophy of the newspaper can most properly be expressed . . . " (emphasis added).

A thematic analysis of sample editorials in Nigerian newspapers indicated that they preferred utilitarian ethics; that is, ethics that contributed to the nation's greatest common good (Pratt, 1989). However, such a contribution is limited by four major factors: (1) the gap between editorial policies (as reflected in editorial ethics) and the realities of the media environment; (2) the failure of private newspapers, which are usually less contrained than the government newspapers, to critically examine the relevance of development problems and projects to national interests; (3) the preponderance in the press of "protocol news" (and views) that have little relevance to development; and (4) the journalist's professional values, which include owing journalistic allegiance to politicians and being susceptible to government manipulation. That study concluded that because of these limiting factors Nigerian journalists needed to re-examine their ethics to more appropriately involve the press in the complex and difficult process of national development.

These limitations of development ethics in the Nigerian press raise two major troubling questions. First, is the development ethics of editorials, which emphasize the "greatest good," consistent with journalists' perceptions

of the role of editorials in national development? Second, as Stevenson (1988, p. 15) pointedly asks, "Is the new journalism of national development merely a new face on old-fashioned political control?" Thus, while the thematic analysis was based on a content analysis of editorials, the present study investigates the perceptions of Nigerian journalists about editorial ethics and about the role of editorials in development. Further, it compares the results of an earlier thematic content analysis of newspaper editorials with the perceptions of Nigerian journalists about journalistic ethics. In essence, then, this study is an extension of the thematic analysis of editorial ethics.

I. Research Questions

The literature on the use and limitations of the mass media for sub-Sahara Africa's development suggests four research questions:

1. How do private and government journalists' perceptions of editorial ethics compare?

2. Are the journalists' perceptions of editorial ethics consistent with earlier results of a content analysis of newspaper editorial ethics?

3. How do private and government journalists' perceptions of the role of their newspapers' editorials in national development compare?

4. Finally, do the journalists' background characteristics (e.g., knowledge of newspaper's code of journalistic ethics, age, length of service, etc.), as independent variables, predict their perceptions of press ethics, as a dependent variable?

II. Ethics Framework

Ethics theories are windows into moral reasoning that "provide vantage points from which important ethical decisions can be considered" (Lambeth, 1986, p. 25). While philosophers in general agree that ethics and morals are synonymous and that both involve human action or <u>praxis</u> (Kant, 1949a/1977a; Bourke, 1966; Garner & Rosen, 1967; Mackie, 1977), little agreement exists on

the criteria for making ethical decisions. However, there are three dominant theoretical approaches to making ethical judgments:

(1) Deontological ethics or formalism, that is, actions that are based on the good intentions of the doer and that satisfy some formal conditions, duties and choices, regardless of their consequences. (Deon means "what ought to be done"; logos means "reason.") A deontologist believes that some actions are inherently and morally obligatory, regardless of their effects on people. Thus, deontologists do not use only results in concluding that an act is ethical or unethical. Rather, they use morality and reason in making such judgments.

(2) Situation ethics, that is, desires of the human nature that compromise moral principles or that set them aside in a situation. Merrill (1975), however, rejects this moral position, describing it as "'non-ethics' or an 'anti-ethics.'"

(3) Result, consequential or utilitarian (teleological) ethics, that is, actions that bring about absolute results, or that satisfy and maximize the common good. Consequences (that is, the good that is produced) determine the morality of the action.

For the deontologist, certain things--virtue, pleasure, and knowledge--are intrinsically good. Promises, contracts, agreements, and one's relationship with those affected by one's action are the criteria that determine what one ought to do. The deontologist does not believe that personal happiness or consequence of an action is most important to ethical considerations. What are important are "a supreme practical principle and a categorical imperative for the human will" (Kant, 1949b/1977b, p. 233) by which one evaluates the specific rules that govern one's actions.

In contrast, the situation ethicist applies the ethical principles (not the laws or rules) of his community and its heritage to every decision-making

situation, thus aiming "at a contextual appropriateness--not the 'good' or the 'right' but the fitting" (Fletcher, 1966, pp. 26-28).

Finally, utilitarians argue that an act is right only if its consequences on everyone (the group or society) are the most desirable. While Jeremy Bentham, the founder of utilitarianism, describes this philosophy as the "greatest happiness for the greatest number," John Stuart Mill emphasizes the quality rather than the quantity of happiness (Boyce & Jensen, 1978, p. 36).

This theoretical framework was applied to an examination of the comparative perceptions of ethics among Nigerian government and private newspaper journalists by asking them to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

- The ethics of your newspaper's editorials is usually determined by a fixed set of journalistic principles, moral obligation or duty, rather than by the perceived consequences of the editorials on interest groups. (Deontological ethics.)
- The ethics of your newspaper's editorials is usually based on journalistic preferences that depart from a fixed set of moral or ethical principles, or that set such principles aside in a given situation. (Situation ethics.)
- The ethics of your newspaper's editorials usually contributes to the nation's greatest "common good." (Utilitarian ethics.)

III. Method

Data were collected from August 1988 through October 1988 from a purposive sample of full-time, salaried journalists on nine Nigerian national newspapers: the Daily Times, which is semifederal government-owned; the New Nigerian, which is federal government-owned; the Daily Sketch, which is jointly owned by the Oyo, Ogun, and Ondo state governments; The Standard, which is owned by the

Plateau State Government; and the Nigerian Tribune, The Guardian, the National Concord, The Punch, and the Vanguard, which are all privately owned. The sample newspapers and respondents were not randomly chosen. Rather, their selection was based on three criteria: all newspapers had national, as opposed to limited or confined, circulation; the newspapers represented the two prevalent Nigerian newspaper ownership patterns, namely, government (state and federal) and private (or independent); and the selection of journalists from newspapers selected in the content-analytical phase of the present study so that comparisons could be made between the results of that phase and those of this study.

The one-page self-administered questionnaire used in this study had 22 questions. Six questions dealt with respondents' background: knowledge of newspaper's code of ethics; attendance at a meeting, workshop or seminar where journalistic ethics was a featured topic; discussion of journalistic ethics with newsroom colleagues; membership of news or editorial section of newspaper; age; and length of service in current position. The other questions were 16 four-point scale items on editorial ethics and on the role of editorials in national development. Respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each item, with "1" indicating "agree" and "4" indicating "disagree."

A total of 379 questionnaires were distributed to the journalists during business hours. Three hundred forty-eight were returned, for a response rate of 92%. This unusually high response rate, in the African context,[3] can be attributed to two major factors. First, the first author or his three research assistants turned in a packet of questionnaires to each newspaper editor, who had been contacted about the study and about the first author's or his research assistants' proposed visit to a newspaper. Such an initial contact generated

a high level of cooperation and support from the editors and their staffs. Second, respondents were given ample time to fill out the one-page questionnaires, which were picked up within one week of distribution.

IV. Results

A majority of the 348 respondents were young, with more than 56 percent reporting that they were 31 years old or younger. Thirty-five percent were in the 32 to 38 age group, six percent were 39 years to 45 years old, one percent were 46 years to 52 years old, while two percent were 53 years old or older.

In regard to length of service, 52 percent of the respondents had 3 years or less in their current positions, while 32 percent had been in their current positions for four to six years. Only about three percent each had been in their current positions for 10 to 12 years and for 13 years or longer.

Editorial ethics: All journalists. Table 1 shows mean scores and standard deviations for journalists' perceptions of ethics. The four lowest mean scores were Items 1 through 4, all of which were lower than 2.0, the category for "slightly agree." For Item 1, which had the highest journalistic support (mean = 1.34) and was closest to the category scored "1" for "agree," the journalists indicated that their editorials addressed the "common good" of the Nigerian public. The second-lowest mean score of 1.35 (Item 2) showed that the journalists thought that their editorials usually contributed to the nation's greatest "common good." Within the context of our ethical framework, Item 1, which had the highest support among the journalists, and Item 2, which was related to Item 1, both indicated that the journalists perceived the presence of utilitarian ethics in their editorials more than either deontological ethics (Item 5) or situation ethics (Item 7). These results are clearly consistent,

in two areas, with the results of a content analysis of the editorials of the newspapers that the sample journalists represent (Pratt, 1989; Pratt, 1988).

First, in the content analysis, the newspaper editorials indicated a preference for utilitarian ethics; situation ethics had the least presence in the editorials. Second, the differences among the mean scores in the present study are consistent with the results of the content-analytical study in that while differences by newspapers were not statistically significant, differences in the application of the dominant type of ethical theory were significant at the .05 level (Pratt, 1989; Pratt, 1988). The application of situation ethics to the editorials of the newspapers was significantly lower than the application of deontological ethics, while the application of utilitarian ethics was significantly higher than the application of both deontological and situation ethics. The interaction between newspapers and dominant type of ethical inclination was not significant ($p > .05$).

Table 1 about here

Editorial ethics: Private vs. government journalists. Table 1 also shows that of the nine statements on ethics, private and government journalists indicated significant (at the .05 level or less) differences on four statements, Items 3, 4, 6 and 9, none of which was on any of the three dominant ethical practices identified in previous research on newspaper editorials (Pratt, 1989; Pratt, 1988) and were the focus of this present study. Beyond that, the two statements (Items 1 and 2) with the highest respondent support did not show any significant differences between private and government journalists.

Government journalists, on the one hand, reported that they were significantly more aware of various codes of journalistic ethics (Item 4), were significantly more concerned about journalistic ethics (Item 6), and that their newspaper editorials were significantly more based on a formal set of ethical or moral principle (Item 9) than were reported by private journalists.

Private journalists, on the other, indicated significantly more agreement than did government journalists with the statement that their newspaper editorials were "based only on verifiable evidence" (Item 3).

The analysis so far focuses on total sample means and between-newspaper group differences. What newspapers accounted for those differences? Table 2 shows statement-by-statement frequencies of significant differences between each newspaper and the other eight, thus identifying the contributions of individual newspapers to the statistical differences among all newsapapers (column 1), between private and government newspapers (column 2), and among private and among government newspapers (column 3). While two private newspapers (The Punch and Vanguard) did not contribute to the overall difference between private and government newspapers on Items 3 and 4, the Nigerian Tribune contributed the most to the differences on Items 3, 4 and 9. However, in those statements--Items 3, 4, 6 and 9--in which statistical differences occurred between both newspaper groups, all the government newspapers contributed to the overall significant differences, with the Daily Sketch contributing the most to two of the four significant differences. On Item 3 ("Your newspaper's editorials are based only on verifiable evidence"), all the government newspapers made equal contribution to the overall difference between private and government newspapers.

Table 2 also shows that the total frequencies of significant differences between both newspaper groups on Item 3 are eight for private and four for

government; on Item 4, six for private and eight for government; on Item 6, eight for private and 12 for government; and on Item 9, nine for private and 13 for government. These results led to the conclusion that even though the number of government newspapers in this study was fewer by one, they made more numeric contributions than the private newspapers to the differences between the two newspaper groups. This indicated that the perception of the ethics statements was significantly higher among the government journalists than among private journalists (column 3).

Table 2 about here

Editorials and development: All journalists. The mean scores for development statements (Table 1, Items 10 through 16) indicated that on the average all the journalists agreed or slightly agreed that their editorials played the development role. Surprisingly, even government journalists thought that, whenever appropriate, their editorials were an adversary of the government (mean = 2.00 for government vs. mean = 1.90 for private, n.s.).

Also from Table 1, the journalists agreed with Item 10 (" . . . editorials emphasize issues and events on national development") more than with any other development item. It was not surprising to find that newspaper editorials (in a Third World nation) emphasized issues and events on national development. Shobowale's (1984/1985) study of 71 Nigerian media staffers showed that about 97 percent of them agreed that "The news media should assist the policies and programs of the government to aid national development" and that all of them agreed that "The media should contribute to community development" (p. 248). More recently, Shah's (1988) study of the preferred roles of journalists at

three prestigious Indian newspapers found that for a majority (63 percent) of the journalists, the "development journalist" role was "extremely important" while only 37 percent felt that the development-support role was "extremely important." It was, therefore, not surprising to find a second-lowest mean score for the statement, "Your newspaper's editorials discuss national-development needs," and a third-lowest mean score for the statement, "Your newspaper's editorials provide in-depth analysis on and interpretation of national-development programs." Speculation about national development (Item 16) had the lowest mean score.

Editorials and development: Private vs. government journalists. While there were four significant differences between private and government journalists on the ethics items (Tables 1 and 2), there were only two such differences on the development items. Item 16, which received the greatest support among all seven development items, also showed the strongest statistical difference ($p < .001$) between private and government newspapers among all the 16 statements. On the one hand, private journalists tended to speculate more about national development than did government journalists. On the other, the editorials of government newspapers tended to support the development goals of governments more than those of private newspapers (Item 13, $p < .05$).

Table 2 shows how these two items (Items 13 and 16) further differentiated private from government journalists. While the government newspapers, which were fewer than the number of private newspapers by one, contributed more significant frequencies than the private newspapers to the difference in Item 13, both newspaper types contributed equally to the difference in Item 16. Two government newspapers--the Daily Times and the Daily Sketch--accounted for most

of the difference in Item 13. Among private newspapers, however, the Vanguard contributed the most.

Clearly, the journalists' perceived level of editorial speculation about national development most significantly differentiated private from government newspapers, differentiated one newspaper from another, differentiated one private newspaper from another private newspapers, and differentiated one government newspaper from another government newspaper (Table 2). Perhaps the sensitivity of speculation about, and the importance of, development to Nigerian military governments made such activity for the government newspapers a cautious one.

Significant differences between newspapers. The means for the sixteen variables for the nine newspapers are shown in Table 1. Further, the ability of the variables to explain differences between and among the newspapers is shown in Table 2. Table 3 shows the significant between-newspaper differences, thus providing detailed information on results summarized in Table 2, column 1.

In terms of individual measures, all but four of the measures (Table 2, column 1, Items 3, 5, 10 and 15) produced significant differences between newspaper pairs. The relative importance of the four measures seems to depend on factors related more to the characteristics of the respondents than to any unique editorial policies of the individual newspapers.

Table 3 about here

In terms of various newspaper pairs, most newspapers are different from the others. The one possible exception is The Punch, which is different from

only four other newspapers. In terms of differences by type of ownership, only one of the non-significant differences occurred in the six possible differences among government newspapers. Two of the non-significant differences occurred between the 10 pairs of private newspapers. The other three non-significant differences occurred in the 20 pairs of public-private newspapers. This indicates that ownership does not seem to be associated with the homogeneity of newspaper ethics.

Private vs. government journalists: Classification analysis, by newspaper. The significant differences among the newspapers suggest the need to provide further description of journalists' characteristics, based on their repsonses to the 16 statements. Discriminant analysis was used to investigate the structure underlying the 16 statements on ethics and development and to classify respondents as working for individual newspapers (Table 4). The statements were used to classify journalists in terms of the predicted newspapers and results were compared to actual newspapers on which they worked. The relationships between these classification results indicated how successful the classification model was in discriminating, by journalists' responses, among the newspapers.

Table 4 shows that some of the private and government journalists were misclassified into other groups. However, while private newspapers' correct classification percentages ranged from 31 to 46, those for the government newspapers ranged from 26 to 63. The lowest and highest correct classifications of journalists were provided by the New Nigerian and the Daily Sketch, respectively, both government newspapers. Among the private newspapers, The Guardian had the highest percentage of correct classification, while the Vanguard has the lowest. The government newspaper that had the highest

percentages of misclassified private newspaper was the Daily Sketch: 13 percent misclassified from The Guardian, 12.5 percent from the Vanguard and 33.3 percent from the Nigerian Tribune. This suggests that the characteristics of the Daily Sketch were such that they were closer to those of private newspapers than to the other three government newspapers. However, no such result was apparent among the private newspapers.

Table 4 about here

The overall classification accuracy or hit ratio for all the newspapers was 39.1 percent, indicating that specific ownership characteristic was not a strong variable in the journalists' perceptions of statements on ethics and development. The data in Table 4 suggest three conclusions. First, whenever private journalists' responses were not typical of their actual newspaper ownerships, they were likely to be typical of those of one government newspaper: the Daily Sketch.

Second, whenever the responses of government journalists were not typical of those of journalists at their newspapers, such responses were not likely to be typical of those of journalists at any private newspaper.

Finally, the low hit ratio of 39.1 percent suggests that the private-government newspaper dichotomy may be more conceptual than substantive; individual newspaper ownership was not strongly associated with journalists' responses.

In the classification analysis that predicted type of newspaper ownership (Table 5), 76.1 percent of the journalists at the private newspapers, as a group, were correctly classified; about 24 percent were incorrectly classified. However, the discriminant analysis was less successful in predicting the

classification of government journalists' responses (53 percent correct vs. 47 percent incorrect). The overall classification or hit ratio for both newspaper groups was about 65 percent, which was much higher than the 39.1 percent hit ratio for classification across all nine newspapers. A closer examination of Table 5 showed that 45 journalists from private newspapers were misclassified as working on government newspapers, while almost one-half of the government newspaper cases were misclassified as private. One possible explanation for this difference is that the journalists' perceptions of ethics and development are more homogeneous than heterogeneous, thus blurring the differences between both newspaper groups. The results on Tables 1 and 2 provide further substantiation for that possibility.

Table 5 about here

The discriminant-function analysis used in this study did not provide information on which of the 16 independent variables significantly discriminated ($p < .05$) between private and government newspapers. Usually, when the purpose of a statistical test is to identify the effects of independent variables on a dependent variable, a common procedure is to use multiple-regression analysis. However, in situations where the dependent variable is binary (0-1), the regression coefficients are less appropriate. The logist procedure, which fits the logistic multiple-regression model (Walker & Duncan, 1967) to a binary dependent variable (private vs. government newspapers), can best determine what variable is included into a model in a given step. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 about here

The binary dependent variable, newspaper control, was regressed on the 16 independent variables. Seven variables entered into the regression model. A non-significant residual chi-square was encountered in the fifth step of the analysis even though the model chi-square for the seventh step was significant ($p < .0001$). This result, in comparison with the results in Tables 1 and 2, suggested that it was not always possible to predict from univariate results (F tests) the variables that will enter a discriminant function.

Speculation about national development entered first, suggesting that significant differences in the levels of speculation were the most important factors that distinguished private from government newspaper journalists. The strength of this variable in distinguishing between both newspaper groups was underscored by Item 15, Tables 1 and 2, which shows speculation as the variable that was most statistically significant in the distinction. Awareness of various codes of journalistic ethics entered second. Steps 6 and 7 entered predictor variables that suggested the importance of situation ethics as yet another distinction between the two newspaper groups. This is consistent with the finding (Table 1, Item 9) that government journalists perceived their editorials as based significantly less on situation ethics than did private journalists. Perhaps government journalists have less ethical flexibility than private journalists because of the hybrid of the authoritarian environment in which they operate and the development role "assigned" to them.

The means, statistical differences and frequencies of statistical differences reported in Tables 1 through 3 give some insight into the differences between private and government newspapers. While the results

indicated that the items used differentiated between pairs of and among newspapers, it is difficult to see underlying relationships because of the large number of differences. To gain an understanding of the underlying factors that influence the differences between newspapers, the data were further subjected to a nine-group canonical discriminant analysis. The reduction of the underlying space of newspapers and items allowed us to look for differences among the newspapers, based on the primary factors of the reduced space (Figure 1).[4]

Using a linear combination and a forward, stepwise procedure for entering the measures, all of the measures were entered as making significant contributions to identifying pair-wise differences except the degree to which ethics is determined by a fixed set of journalistic principles (formalism) rather than by the perceived consequences of the editorials on interest groups. In terms of the dimensionality of the space underlying the differences among the newspapers, five dimensions significantly contributed to the pair-wise differences ($p < .05$). The first three dimensions explained 74.0% of the variance between the pairs of newspapers and these three dimensions were used for looking at the major underlying relationships. Interpretations of the dimensions are made from the correlations of the items with the canonical dimensions, using items having correlations greater than an absolute value of .30 on the dimension, as shown in parentheses after the corresponding items in the text below. The means for the nine newspapers on the three dimensions are shown in Table 7 and in Figure 1.

Table 7 about here

Dimension I: Support vs. lack of support for governments' development plans. This dimension, accounting for 36.2% of the total variance, differentiates those newspapers that support the development goals of federal and state governments (-.44) from those that speculate about the future (.51), that base their conclusions on in-depth analysis and interpretation (.41), and that feel that they contribute to the nation's "greatest common good" (.32). This represents the underlying focus of the newspapers and indicates a basic difference of government support versus editorial interpretation of the future. Those that support the governments' interpretation of the future are found at the positive end of the dimension while those that march to their own drummers are at the negative end. This dimension shows the importance of development in differentiating among newspapers.

Figure 1 about here

Dimension II: Formalism and the "common good." The second dimension, accounting for 23.3% of the total variance, represents a combination of the purpose of editorials and the development ethics of such editorials. Newspapers at the positive end of the dimension tended to base their editorials on a formal set of ethical or moral principles (.30), for example, deontological ethics. Those at the negative end of the dimension felt that the ethics of their editorials contributed to the nation's "common good" (.47) and based their editorials on an in-depth analysis and interpretation of development news (.34). This dimension represents the contrast of the strong sense of using a formal set of ethics for attaining the nation's "common good" versus dependence on some other unspecified means for determining editorial policy geared toward

attaining the "common good." The high mean score (.753) for the National Concord shows such contrast by indicating that it is the most concerned about the nation's "common good," a finding that is consistent with that of the content analysis of the editorials of the newspapers on which the respondents work.

Dimension III: Awareness of codes of journalistic ethics vs. usability of journalistic ethics. The third dimension, accounting for 14.5% of the total variance, is a contrast between concern and awareness about journalistic code of ethics and codes that are general and too vague to be used. Journalists on the newspapers at the positive end of the dimension were more concerned about codes of journalistic ethics (-.57) and were more aware of various codes of journalistic ethics (-.37). They had editorials that discussed national development needs (-.42) and that addressed the common good of the Nigerian public (-.30). Those at the negative end based their ethics on journalistic preferences (.40) and had codes that were too vague for practical value (.40). This dimension represents the maturity of ethical codes in determining editorial content.

Table 7 also shows that the two federal government newspapers--the Daily Times and the New Nigerian--are at the positive end of Dimension I and on the lower end of Dimension III, while the state government newspapers and the private newspapers are on the other end of each of the two dimensions. Two implications of this structure are apparent. The first is that federal government journalists are suggesting that they may be facing more pressures from their proprietors to support governments' development plans than do private and state government journalists. The second is that because state government journalists indicate higher concerns about awareness of codes of journalistic

ethics and their practicality and also indicate lower support for governments' development plans than do federal government journalists, it is possible that state government journalists may be using their awareness of their codes of journalistic ethics to fend off governmental pressures on them that may not be readily apparent among private journalists.

Background factors and ethics measures. The questionnaire used in this study had six questions on the journalists' background: knowledge of newspaper's code of journalistic ethics, attendance at a seminar or workshop where journalistic ethics was a featured topic, discussion of journalistic ethics with newspaper colleagues, membership of the news or editorial department, age and length of service in present department. Research among U.S. journalists (e.g., Anderson, 1987; Endres, 1985; Gray & Wilhoit, 1983) suggests the influence of some such background factors on ethical conduct.

The relative contributions of six background variables to three measures of ethics were tested through multiple-regression analyses (general linear models procedure). Items 5, 8 and 9 in Table 1 were used as measures of utilitarian, situation and deontological ethics, respectively.

In each case, the regression of the dependent measure on the six independent variables produced a significant overall model. Attendance at a meeting, workshop or seminar where journalistic ethics was a featured topic and discussion of journalistic ethics with colleagues on a newspaper did not contribute significantly to the variance in the criterion variables.

The model ($F = 2.16$, $df = 14$, $p < .01$) for the regression of utilitarian ethics on the six background characteristics showed respondents' age and length of service in current position as significant ($p < .05$) sources of variance. The younger the journalist and the shorter his or her length of service in a

current position, the more likely such journalist will have the utilitarian perception.

The regression of situation ethics on the six independent measures also produced a significant overall model ($F = 2.60$, $df = 14$, $p < .001$). As was the case for deontological ethics, situation ethics was significantly predicted by only one independent variable: knowledge of newspaper's code of journalistic ethics (least squares mean = 2.91 vs. 2.51 for lack of such knowledge).

The final ethics measure, deontological ethics, when regressed on the six independent variables, also produced an overall model that was significant ($F = 2.44$, $df = 14$, $p < .01$); however, only membership of the editorial department of a newspaper (least squares mean = 2.40 vs. 2.00 for non-membership) was a significant predictor in that equation.

Based on these results, summary answers to the four research questions posed at the outset are as follows:

- On the nine measures of ethics, private and government journalists in general showed more similarities than differences, but the differences were not apparent for any of the three overall measures of utilitarian, situation, and deontological ethics. This suggests, for the most part, conformity in ethics among the journalists in this study. Further, private journalists had a significantly lower mean score than government journalists in their perception of the extent to which their editorials were based only on verifiable evidence. The other three items (Items 4, 6 and 9) on which both groups differed showed that government journalists had significantly higher agreements with the statements than private journalists. The discriminant analysis indicated a difference between private and government newspapers (Dimension 3), but it also showed that this is not the primary difference among the newspapers; the difference is in a complex five-dimensional space. The discriminant analysis supports the centrality of governments' development plans to daily newspaper journalists (Dimension 1).

- Of the three overall measures of ethics, our results indicated journalists' preference for utilitarian ethics; situation ethics had the least preference. These are consistent with the results of an earlier content-analytical study of the editorial ethics of the newspapers that the sample journalists in the present study represented.

- On the comparisons of private and government journalists' perception of the role of their newspapers' editorials in national development, significant differences were observed on only two items: editorial support for the

development goals of governments and editorial speculation about national development. Government journalists perceived their editorials as more supportive of the government than did private journalists (Item 13, $p < .05$). In contrast, government journalists perceived their editorials as speculating less than those of private newspapers (Item 16, $p < .001$). Further, of all the 16 statements to which the journalists responded, Item 16 showed the largest significant difference between both sample groups.

- Finally, the investigation of the predictive strengths of the journalists' six background characteristics (independent measures) for three measures of press ethics (criterion variables) indicated significant overall models for all three dependent measures. However, all the R-squares were low, explaining between 8 percent and 9 percent of the total variance. Nonetheless, the significant regression equations indicated that age, length of service in a department, membership of editorial (as opposed to news) department, and knowledge of newspaper's code of journalistic ethics significantly accounted for the variance in the journalists' perceptions of ethics.

V. Discussion

The purpose of the present research was to determine the perceptions of a purposive sample of Nigerian private and government journalists about editorial ethics and about the role of editorials in national development. Its results suggest the discussion of a major issue: homogeneity in journalists' perceptions of ethics.

In the initial content analysis of the editorial content of the newspapers that the journalists represented, there were clear indications that the editorials had more similarities than differences in ethical inclinations. The observed differences were among ethical inclinations, not among newspapers, regardless of their ownership structure (Pratt, 1988; Pratt, 1989). In the present study, there were more between-group similarities than between-group differences in the journalists' perception of editorial ethics. The similarities may be explained by four major factors.

The first is the unifying function of the press. Because Nigerian administrations have continually emphasized the overriding importance of integrating people's loyalties into one national symbol (e.g., Arikpo, 1967,

p. 165), it is possible that such governmental concerns manifest themselves as pressures on journalists to conform to set norms. Consequently, such journalists may indicate more homogeneous than heterogeneous perceptions of their national roles.

The second is the effect of "cultural synchronization" (Hamelink, 1983), specifically the homogenizing effects of national cultural synchronization. Hamelink (1983) observed that in the absence of a single national culture in the Third World, the small, urban, foreign-oriented elites have a decisive influence on the cultural environment of the rest of the population. Because the urban elites are agents of foreign cultural influence, their domestic actions have a synchronic mode by which

> decisions regarding the cultural environment in a given country are made in accordance with the interests and needs of a powerful central nation and imposed with subtle but devastating effectiveness without regard for the adaptive necessities of the dependent nation (Hamelink, 1983, p. 22).

Thus, because media operations in Nigeria are managed by journalists whose news-value criteria are occasionally influenced by foreign news values primarily through the agenda-setting influence of the transnational news services, such journalists are likely to demonstrate perceptions that tend toward homogeneity. Beyond that, governmental intervention in the form of military dictatorships and in the funding of newspaper operations influenced African newspaper editors' attitudes toward media issues (Roser & Brown, 1986). The reasons suggested for such influence included the possibility that the editors had a strong sense of nationalism that carried more weight than their journalistic values and that dependence of their newspapers on government policies may have led to more acceptance of governmental restrictions and controls in news transmissions.

The third is the occurrence of "reference group behavior," a magnet element that leads to in-groupness and conformity among journalists and a steady expectation of continued employment (Breed, 1955). The influence of "reference group behavior" also brings to the fore its homogenizing effects on the journalists' ethics and on their perceptions of editorial role in national development. Sobowale (1978/1979) reported that

> Nigerian journalists still very much respect the opinions of their reference groups. The perception of people whose opinions they value considerably influences what they think about the jobs they do and the decision to go on doing it (p. 189).

Consequently, if the editorial staffs on Nigerian national newsapapers, in comparison with those on U.S. newspapers, were not "inner-directed high professional" journalists, but were "other-directed" (Schwartz, 1978), did they, therefore, conduct themselves within the strict confines of the limited interests of the urban elites or of their newspaper proprietors? A plausible argument might be that the emergence of relative newsroom conformity in the Nigerian situation is signified by the Nigerian economy that has been hurting since the slump in oil revenues in the early 1980s reduced the number of employment opportunities even among highly skilled professionals. The limited growth in the industrial sector has worsened the availability of newsprint and other printing materials, purchased in hard currencies, to the newspaper industry; has increased the costs for newspaper distribution; and has reduced newspaper advertising revenues. It is not surprising, therefore, that Nigerian journalists may emphasize a careerist attribute--job security--rather than a professional attribute: independent thought and action, based on a code of ethics.

Similar results were indentified in a stepwise multiple-regression analysis of professional and nonprofessional indices that explained job satisfaction among Nigerian public-relations practitioners (Pratt, 1986). Job

security and job excitement (both nonprofessional indices) entered second and third, respectively. Thus, it appeared that job security, which was threatened by the Buhari administration's controversial economic policies at the time of the practitioner survey, was as important to the practitioners as it was to the journalists in the present study.

Sobowale (1978/1979), in a national survey of 407 Nigerian journalists, reported the failure to discover a causal model of professionalism for them. While multi-variate analyses supported the existence of three types of individual commitments to the organization, profession and task, and of the relationships between social-psychological variables and the three commitment types, the latter relationships did not disappear when professional-value orientations were introduced as an intervening variable. However, the social-psychological variables were found to be independently associated with the three types of commitments and with professional-value orientations. Further, a professional index created by summing all the professional-value items did not associate with any of the three commitment variables. Thus, the study supports the careerist attitudes of Nigerian journalists and their low professionalism vis-à-vis their commitments to their task. Similarly, while Shobowale (1984/1985) reported that his limited sample of 71 Nigerian media staffers were generally in agreement with the ideals of professionalism, they indicated a professional orientation that was "observedly nascent" and the journalists were "especially lacking in vital areas that are important to the correlates of professionalism" (pp. 316-317).

A final major factor is rooted in both the African personality and in the African religion. The African personality emphasizes "wholesome human relations at all cost," altruism, "community fellow-feeling," and a live-and-let-live philosophy (Sofola, 1973). The influences of these

characteristics are so far-reaching in the continent that they minimize the effects of ethnic-group rivalries and conflicts on the African personality. Also, Nigerian traditional religions, which are more popular than imported religions, have a powerful hold on Nigerians and enforce the moral standards acceptable to them (Amadi, 1982). Because the practice of African religions requires that morals extend to all areas of the lives of individuals and of society and that community members contribute to community welfare, such religions have an overall homogenizing influence on the African (Mbiti, 1975, pp. 180-181).

VI. Implications and Conclusions

Several implications of this study are noteworthy. The first is governments' homogenizing influence on the Nigerian mass media--both government and private. Ugboajah's (1980) study of the editorial positions on four development issues among four private and four government newspapers in Nigeria showed that of the 25 editorials evaluated, eight were anti-government, eight were pro-government and nine were neutral. These results showed that only one former state government newspaper--the New Nigerian--carried anti-government editorials. An implication of this finding is that government ownership does not necessarily presage the undermining of the media in serving as viable institutions.

However, a content analysis of the news and editorial content of two Nigerian daily newspapers, the Daily Times and the New Nigerian, found a softening of the editorial tone of the newspapers after they were acquired by the federal military government (Ibe, 1985). The author attributed it to the sensitivity of the editors to the federal government's agenda.

Additionally, government's media policies have overtly constrained the press's activities. The appointment in May 1987 of a serving military officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Ogbomo, as the acting general manager of the Plateau Publishing Company, a state government-owned newspaper house and publisher of The Standard, was interpreted by some Nigerian journalists as indicative of a more direct government control of media houses and operations ("Nigeria: Media," 1987). An earlier measure, the "Public Officers (Protection Against False Accusation) Decree 1984," commonly known as Decree No. 4, was announced March 29, 1984. It provided in Article 1 (1) that:

> Any person who publishes in any form, whether written or otherwise, any message, rumour, report or statement . . . which is false in any material particular or which brings or is calculated to bring the Federal Military Government or the Government of a State or a public officer to ridicule or disrepute, shall be guilty of an offence under this Decree (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1984, p. A 53).

Under the decree, repealed in 1985 by Nigeria's current military administration, journalists were arrested, harassed, or imprisoned. In July 1984, for example, Tunde Thompson, a senior diplomatic correspondent, and Nduka Irabor, an assistant news editor, both at The Guardian, were arrested for speculating about changes in Nigeria's foreign missions and were each jailed one year for speculating about a replacement for Nigeria's high commissioner to the United Kingdom. Some other examples of arrests under Decree No. 4: Haroun Adamu, editorial adviser of The Punch; Lade Bonuola and Femi Kusa, associate and assistant editors, respectively, of The Guardian; Duro Onabule, editor of the National Concord; and A. B. Ahmed, Sunday editor of the New Nigerian, a government newspaper.

Further, in 1986, an early publication of the draft of an official document by the Vanguard caused official outcry in some government-run higher educational institutions. In the fall of 1987, federal and state governments interfered

with media reporting by revamping the management of the New Nigerian, by firing Jonathan Ishaku, editor of The Standard, and 100 of his staffs, and by firing Ade Fagbemi of the Herald, also a state government newspaper. These incidents are inimical to the editorial independence and function of the press because, among other things, they homogenize the press's ethical inclinations, which further limit its contributions to national development (see, for example, Pratt, 1989).

The second implication is suggested by the significantly high support from private journalists for the extent to which their editorials are based on verifiable evidence. This support may be explained by the prevalence of the use of government sources for news by the press in general. However, because government newspapers use more government news sources than private newspapers and because private newspapers face difficulties that emanate from the absence of verification of their news sources, private newspapers are more likely than government newsapapers to be cautious in expressing their editorial opinions. Further, perhaps because of such caution, the private newspapers are, therefore, more likely than the government newspapers to speculate about national development. This means that speculation is more likely to occur among private newspapers primarily because they tend to verify their news sources more rigorously than do government newspapers.

Third, this study also reports an overwhelming positive perception of editorial role in national development. (The means for Items 10 through 16 [development items] ranged from 1.21 to 2.00 while those for Items 1 through 9 [ethics items] ranged from 1.34 to 3.21.) This finding is consistent with the traditional support for development that is demonstrated by Third World mass media. Further, the finding that government editorials usually supported governments' development goals more than private editorials was also not

surprising. What is surprising, however, is that these findings suggested that the blanket call for private media ownership (e.g., Edeani, 1985) as a panacea for the limitations of sub-Sahara Africa's media and for the "perceived danger" about "the current trend towards a monolithic mass media system owned and controlled by the Federal and state governments" (Uche, 1989, p. 101) may be misconceived. Ugboajah's (1980) content analysis of the editorial opinions of Nigerian newspapers led to the conclusion that "Ownership may not be as strong as geographical location in moulding newspaper opinion and reportage in the Nigerian circumstance" (p. 36). A tentative conclusion that can be drawn from the present study is that it is not media ownership that affects media operations as much as journalists' characteristics (e.g., their professionalism) and governments' media policies (e.g., "coopting" influential journalists into the government as a systematic way of softening the press's criticisms of the government [Uche, 1989]). In 1984, for example, the conditions for the issuance of import licenses for newsprint were more favorable to government than to private newspapers; therefore, attempts to improve media role in Third World development must also directly address such major policy issues.

Fourth, the large proportion of correct classification of journalists on the Daily Sketch also has implications for journalistic ethics, given the long tradition of governmental threats that are used "to justify governmental policies which promote developmental journalism" (e.g., Seng & Hunt, 1986, p. 104) and suggestions that private media ownership is an ideal structure for Nigerian journalism (e.g., Edeani, 1970; 1985). From Table 4, we see that the Daily Sketch, a state-government newspaper, indicates characteristics atypical of those of other government newspapers. Table 7 shows that the Daily Sketch

is similar to the private newspapers on the strongest dimension: governments' development plans.

Given its founding in 1964, a period marked by intense political rivalry in the aftermath of Nigeria's newly won independence from Great Britain and by controversies on the census results of 1963 and on those of the general elections of 1964, it is not surprising that its vitriolic tone nurtured to support the then Western Regional Government of Nigeria during those difficult periods may have instituted a journalistic value system that was not typical of the other three government newspapers. This possibility gains credence for two reasons. The first is the notion expressed by Jose (1975) that Nigerian newspapers that were once anti-colonists (that is, against the colonial government) could no longer afford to be so because the urgent tasks of nation-building required that they toned down their anti-government rhetoric. He wrote:

> In many African societies, the press was used as a weapon in the fight against colonial rule. . . . in the name of press freedom and nationalism we deliberately wrote seditious articles against colonial governments. Today, . . . many African journalists still believe that a good press is one that is in constant state of war with the government; that a progressive journalist is one who is in and out of prison for sedition. My own strong view is that African press cannot use the strategy and weapons we used against our own government whether elected or in uniform. It would be self-destructive (p. 259).

The second is the "conformity-deviation problem" of newspapers (Breed, 1955), by which staffers at the Sketch may readily conform to government media policies, even though they were frequently being revised by successive governments, which were continually redefining local and national interests. Whatever the reason, the typification of the responses of Daily Sketch journalists as government journalists should be a matter of concern, particularly in the light of governments' continuing pronouncements that a free

press is an ingredient for national development and of the journalists' professed professionalism.

The classification results indicated by the Daily Sketch suggest that future research consider it as a case study in further investigating the "conformity-deviation" issue in Nigerian journalism. Obviously, while the classification analysis in Table 4 indicated that the Sketch had the highest percentage of correct classification, it also suggested that future research identify what newsroom characteristics may contribute to or account for the classification pattern.

Clearly, the simple, traditional distinctions between private and government newspapers in the Third World context were not the most critical factors in this study in that only a few perceptual differences occurred. Differences existed, but they were complex. It appears, then, that our understanding of the complex private-government press distinction in sub-Saharan Africa is still minuscule. Tables 1 and 2 show perceptual similarities and differences, Tables 6 and 7 show those perceptions that distinguish private from government newspapers, and Figure 1 plots the differences in a reduced discriminant space. Future research could identify the political and socio-psychological variables that further explain such perceptual similarities and differences. Such research will need to consider ethics within a strategic context such as governments' development plans.

This study also brings to the fore the importance to Nigerian print journalists of three ethical dimensions: the use of ethics in support of governments' development plans, formalism and the nation's "common good," and awareness and the practicality of journalistic ethics. The first two dimensions, again, underscore the importance of utilitarianism in this study, thus further suggesting the preference of the Third World daily press in

fulfilling its "assigned" development role, even if it does not do so of its accord. The third dimension showed the journalists' concern about the relevance of journalistic ethics to their roles. This dimension is consistent with a result of a recent study that found that countries in the Middle East, Latin America and Asia tended to have positive feelings toward in-country codes of ethics (Merrill, 1988). Other countries opposed such codes. Nigeria, on the other hand, was among countries most in favor of global codes of ethics. Thus, while Nigerian media spokesmen had ambivalent feelings about the value of in-country codes of ethics, such sentiments were not expressed vis-à-vis international codes of ethics. It appears, then, that a concern about journalistic ethics among Nigerian journalists may also arise from the absence of any ethical codes at the governmental level, thus pitting in-house journalistic codes of ethics against those presumed held by Nigerian governments.

Finally, this study demonstrates that the predictive strengths of four of our six background factors are weak, based on the low R-squares for the regression equations for the total sample. However, because its findings are limited by its design, future studies should also examine a broad range of demographic, social and organizational variables that might be associated with journalists' perception of editorial ethics and of editorial role in national development.

NOTES

1. The Concord Press of Nigeria, the parent company of the National Concord, has 23 media publications, making it the largest of its kind in sub-Saharan Africa.

2. The Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi. (n.d.). 1986-87 journalism ethics report (pp. 13-27). Chicago, Ill: Author.

3. An example that illustrates the difficulty of getting enough responses to surveys in Nigeria in particular is provided by a 1983 survey of high-school teachers in the Kaduna City School System of Nigeria (Fadeyibi, 1983/1984). Out of a total of 175 questionnaires distributed by high-school principals to their staffs, only 82 were completed during a 14-day period, for a 47 percent return rate. And this was after several reminders were given to the teachers by the researcher and by the principals. Shobowale's (1984/1985) survey of Nigerian media staffers used a purposive sample for "practical considerations" (p. 226). Yet, the national survey yielded a minuscule 71 usable questionnaires.

   Another illustration is provided by a survey of Indian journalists (Shah, 1988). The author distributed questionnaires to 205 journalists, and, when responses were not forthcoming, personally met with the journalists in an effort to get completed surveys. Only 38 were returned, for an 18.5 percent response rate.

4. Our initial discriminant analysis showed how the centroids for the nine newspapers differed on two underlying dimensions (functions). Additionally, visual interpretation of the nine newspaper group centroids suggested that a line could be drawn to split the ownership structures of both newspaper groups in a manner reasonably consistent with the interpretability of the two-function solution. A three-function analysis (Figure 1) was also done and selected because of its greater strength in explaining the space of the newspapers.

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TABLE 1

Means and Standard Deviations for Newspaper Journalists' Perceptions of Editorial Ethics and of the Role of Editorials in National Development, by Newspaper Ownership

Statement	All Journalists (N = 348)		Private Journalists (N = 188)		Government Journalists (N = 160)		Significance (p) of Difference Between the Means for Private and Government Journalists
	Mean[a]	SD	Mean[a]	SD	Mean[a]	SD	
Ethics							
1. Your newspaper's editorials address the "common good" of the Nigerian public	1.34	.67	1.37	.65	1.26	.65	.157
2. The ethics of your newspaper's editorials usually contributes to the nation's greatest "common good"	1.35	.64	1.36	.66	1.26	.61	.137
3. Your newspaper's editorials are based only on verifiable evidence	1.48	.77	1.37	.65	1.58	.88	.012
4. Your editorial staff is aware of various codes of journalistic ethics	1.65	.85	1.77	.92	1.49	.75	.003
5. The ethics of your newspaper's editorials is usually determined by a fixed set of journalistic principles, moral obligation or duty, rather than by the perceived consequences of the editorials on interest groups	2.28	1.12	2.27	1.08	2.27	1.16	.987

TABLE 1 continues

TABLE 1 (continued)

Statement	All Journalists (N = 348) Mean[a]	SD	Private Journalists (N = 188) Mean[a]	SD	Government Journalists (N = 160) Mean[a]	SD	Significance (p) of Difference Between the Means for Private and Government Journalists
Ethics (continued)							
6. Today, your editorial staff is more concerned about journalistic ethics than the editorial staff of, say, five years ago	2.31	1.10	2.41	1.10	2.16	1.09	.038
7. The ethics of your newspaper's editorials is usually based on journalistic preferences that depart from a fixed set of moral or ethical principles, or that set such principles aside in a given situation	2.81	1.10	2.74	1.10	2.93	1.08	.120
8. The code of ethics of your editorial staff is somewhat too vague to be of much practical value	3.08	1.07	3.09	1.08	3.08	1.06	.966
9. Your newspaper's editorials are not based on any formal set of ethical or moral principle	3.21	1.09	3.35	1.02	3.04	1.15	.006

TABLE 1 continues

TABLE 1 (continued)

Statement	All Journalists (N = 348) Mean[a]	SD	Private Journalists (N = 188) Mean[a]	SD	Government Journalists (N = 160) Mean[a]	SD	Significance (p) of Difference Between the Means for Private and Government Journalists
Development							
10. Your newspaper's editorials emphasize issues and events on national development	1.21	.55	1.18	.55	1.22	.56	.521
11. Your newspaper's editorials discuss national-development needs	1.31	.62	1.35	.69	1.24	.53	.098
12. Your newspaper's editorials provide in-depth analysis on and interpretation of national-development programs	1.49	.80	1.48	.70	1.47	.90	.911
13. Your newspaper's editorials usually support the development goals of federal and state governments	1.76	.93	1.89	.95	1.67	.89	.026
14. Whenever appropriate, your newspaper's editorials are an adversary of federal and state governments	1.96	1.14	1.90	1.16	2.00	1.13	.417
15. Your newspaper's editorials discuss national-development policies while they are being formulated	1.99	1.03	1.93	1.00	2.05	1.06	.284

TABLE 1 continues

TABLE 1 (continued)

Statement	All Journalists (N = 348) Mean[a]	SD	Private Journalists (N = 188) Mean[a]	SD	Government Journalists (N = 160) Mean[a]	SD	Significance (p) of Difference Between the Means for Private and Government Journalists
Development (continued)							
16. Your newspaper's editorials speculate about national development	2.00	1.03	1.80	.99	2.18	1.04	.0004

[a] A "1" on the original scale represented "agree," while a "4" represented "disagree." Therefore, the smaller the mean the greater the respondent's agreement with a statement.

TABLE 2

Newspaper Journalists' Perceptions of Editorial Ethics and of the Role of Editorials in National Development, by Newspaper

Statement	Significance of Difference Among Newspapers[a]			Overall Frequencies of Significant Differences Among Newspapers, at or less than the .05 level[a]								
				Private Newspapers[b]					Government Newspapers[c]			
	Among All Newspapers	Private vs. Government Newspapers	Among Private Newspapers and Among Government Newspapers	1 (N = 46)	2 (N = 35)	3 (N = 32)	4 (N = 27)	5 (N = 48)	6 (N = 47)	7 (N = 39)	8 (N = 41)	9 (N = 33)
Ethics												
1. Your newspaper's editorials address the "common good" of the Nigerian public	< .001	n.s.	< .01	4	3	4	4	4	2	--	3	4
2. The ethics of your newspaper's editorials usually contributes to the nation's greatest "common good"	< .001	n.s.	< .001	3	3	2	2	5	5	2	4	4
3. Your newspaper's editorials are based only on verifiable evidence	n.s.	.01	n.s.	1	--	--	6	1	1	1	1	1

TABLE 2 continues

TABLE 2 (continued)

Statement	Significance of Difference Among Newspapers[a]			Private Newspapers[b]					Government Newspapers[c]			
	Among All Newspapers	Private vs. Government Newspapers	Among Private Newspapers and Among Government Newspapers	1 (N = 46)	2 (N = 35)	3 (N = 32)	4 (N = 27)	5 (N = 48)	6 (N = 47)	7 (N = 39)	8 (N = 41)	9 (N = 33)
Ethics (continued)												
4. Your editorial staff is aware of various codes of journalistic ethics	< .05	< .01	n.s.	2	--	--	3	1	1	2	4	1
5. The ethics of your newspaper's editorials is usually determined by a fixed set of journalistic principles, moral obligation or duty, rather than by the perceived consequences of the editorials on interest groups	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	4	3	4	4	4	2	--	3	4
6. Today, your editorial staff is more concerned about journalistic ethics than the editorial staff of, say, five years ago	< .001	< .05	< .01	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	7	2

TABLE 2 continues

TABLE 2 (continued)

Statement	Significance of Difference Among Newspapers[a]			Private Newspapers[b]					Government Newspapers[c]			
	Among All Newspapers	Private vs. Government Newspapers	Among Private Newspapers and Among Government Newspapers	1 (N = 46)	2 (N = 35)	3 (N = 32)	4 (N = 27)	5 (N = 48)	6 (N = 47)	7 (N = 39)	8 (N = 41)	9 (N = 33)
Ethics (continued)												
7. The ethics of your newspaper's editorials is usually based on journalistic preferences that depart from a fixed set of moral or ethical principles or that set such principles aside in a given situation	< .001	n.s.	< .001	3	2	1	4	2	2	1	7	2
8. The code of ethics for your editorial staff is somewhat too vague to be of much practical value	< .01	n.s.	< .01	4	1	--	1	4	2	2	3	1
9. Your newspaper's editorials are not based on any formal set of ethical or moral principles	< .01	< .01	< .01	1	1	1	4	2	2	6	2	3

TABLE 2 continues

TABLE 2 (continued)

Statement	Significance of Difference Among Newspapers[a]			Private Newspapers[b]					Government Newspapers[c]			
	Among All Newspapers	Private vs. Government Newspapers	Among Private Newspapers and Among Government Newspapers	1 (N = 46)	2 (N = 35)	3 (N = 32)	4 (N = 27)	5 (N = 48)	6 (N = 47)	7 (N = 39)	8 (N = 41)	9 (N = 33)
Development												
10. Your newspaper's editorials emphasize issues and events on national development	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	1	--	--	2	--	--	--	--	--
11. Your newspaper's editorials discuss national-development needs	< .01	n.s.	< .01	5	2	4	2	1	1	2	1	4
12. Your newspaper's editorials provide in-depth analysis on and interpretation of national-development programs	< .0001	n.s.	< .0001	4	2	4	2	4	7	4	5	4

TABLE 2 continues

TABLE 2 (continued)

Statement	Significance of Difference Among Newspapers[a]			Private Newspapers[b]					Government Newspapers[c]			
	Among All Newspapers	Private vs. Government Newspapers	Among Private Newspapers and Among Government Newspapers	1 (N = 46)	2 (N = 35)	3 (N = 32)	4 (N = 27)	5 (N = 48)	6 (N = 47)	7 (N = 39)	8 (N = 41)	9 (N = 33)
Development (continued)												
13. Your newspaper's editorials usually support the development goals of federal and state governments	< .0001	< .05	< .0001	3	2	6	1	3	7	2	5	3
14. Whenever appropriate, your newspaper's editorials are an adversary of federal and state governments	< .05	n.s.	< .05	1	2	--	1	2	4	2	--	--
15. Your newspaper's editorials discuss national-development policies while they are being formulated	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

TABLE 2 continues

TABLE 2 (continued)

Statement	Significance of Difference Among Newspapers[a]			Private Newspapers[b]					Government Newspapers[c]			
	Among All Newspapers	Private vs. Government Newspapers	Among Private Newspapers and Among Government Newspapers	1 (N = 46)	2 (N = 35)	3 (N = 32)	4 (N = 27)	5 (N = 48)	6 (N = 47)	7 (N = 39)	8 (N = 41)	9 (N = 33)
Development (continued)												
16. Your newspaper's editorials speculate about national development	< .0001	< .001	< .0001	3	4	3	6	3	4	4	5	6

[a] Statistical differences are based on initial F-tests (ANOVAs). Subsequent tests are based on least squares means multiple-comparison procedures.

[b] Private newspapers: 1 = The Guardian, 2 = The Punch, 3 = Vanguard, 4 = Nigerian Tribune, 5 = National Concord

[c] Government newspapers: 6 = Daily Times, 7 = New Nigerian, 8 = Daily Sketch, 9 = The Standard

TABLE 3

Matrix of Significant Differences Between Newspapers[a]

Newspaper Ownership	Private Newspapers (N = 188)					Government Newspapers (N = 160)			
	The Guardian (N = 46)	The Punch (N = 35)	Vanguard (N = 32)	Nigerian Tribune (N = 27)	National Concord (N = 48)	Daily Times (N = 47)	New Nigerian (N = 39)	Daily Sketch (N = 41)	The Standard (N = 33)
Private Newspapers									
The Guardian		1.36	2.43	2.94	3.64	3.99	2.54	4.11	2.63
The Punch	--		2.00	1.56	3.01	3.22	1.60	2.53	1.56
Vanguard	**	*		2.00	2.22	3.42	2.98	2.55	3.60
Nigerian Tribune	**	--	*		3.06	4.75	4.02	1.61	3.68
National Concord	**	**	**	**		2.22	3.40	4.43	3.36

TABLE 3 continues

TABLE 3 (continued)

Newspaper Ownership	Private Newspapers (N = 188)					Government Newspapers (N = 160)			
	The Guardian (N = 46)	The Punch (N = 35)	Vanguard (N = 32)	Nigerian Tribune (N = 27)	National Concord (N = 48)	Daily Times (N = 47)	New Nigerian (N = 39)	Daily Sketch (N = 41)	The Standard (N = 33)
Government Newspapers									
Daily Times	**	**	**	**	**		2.26	6.51	3.25
New Nigerian	**	--	**	**	**	**		4.12	1.31
Daily Sketch	**	**	**	--	**	**	**		3.32
The Standard	**	--	**	**	**	**	--	**	
Total Number of Significant Differences	7	4	8	6	8	8	6	7	6

[a] Values above the diagonal are F statistics, based on 15, 325 degrees of freedom.

-- p > .05 (not significant)
* p < .05
** p < .01

TABLE 4

Classification Matrix for the Discriminant Analysis of Journalists' Responses to 16 Statements on Ethics and Development, In Percentages[a]

Actual Newspaper Ownership	Actual Total	Predicted Newspaper Ownership									
		Private Newspapers (N = 173)					Government Newspapers (N = 175)				
		The Guardian (N = 34)	The Punch (N = 30)	Vanguard (N = 34)	Nigerian Tribune (N = 42)	National Concord (N = 33)	Daily Times (N = 44)	New Nigerian (N = 28)	Daily Sketch (N = 63)	The Standard (N = 40)	Predicted Total
Private Newspapers											
The Guardian	(N = 46)	45.6	8.7	8.7	8.7	6.5	0	4.4	13.0	4.4	100%
The Punch	(N = 35)	0	37.1	5.7	14.3	2.9	8.6	8.6	5.7	17.1	100%
Vanguard	(N = 32)	12.5	3.1	31.2	15.6	9.4	6.3	3.1	12.5	6.3	100%
Nigerian Tribune	(N = 27)	14.8	0	0	40.8	0	3.7	7.4	33.3	0	100%
National Concord	(N = 48)	4.2	0	4.2	12.5	35.4	22.9	4.2	12.5	4.1	100%

TABLE 4 continues

TABLE 4 (continued)

Actual Newspaper Ownership	Actual Total	Predicted Newspaper Ownership: Private Newspapers (N = 173) The Guardian (N = 34)	The Punch (N = 30)	Vanguard (N = 34)	Nigerian Tribune (N = 42)	National Concord (N = 33)	Government Newspapers (N = 175) Daily Times (N = 44)	New Nigerian (N = 28)	Daily Sketch (N = 63)	The Standard (N = 40)	Predicted Total
Government Newspapers											
Daily Times	(N = 47)	6.4	2.1	6.4	10.6	10.6	<u>34.1</u>	12.8	6.4	10.6	100%
New Nigerian	(N = 39)	0	5.1	7.7	10.3	5.1	12.8	<u>25.6</u>	10.3	23.1	100%
Daily Sketch	(N = 41)	0	7.3	14.6	2.5	4.9	0	2.4	<u>63.4</u>	4.9	100%
The Standard	(N = 33)	0	18.2	12.1	3.0	0	18.2	3.0	9.1	<u>36.4</u>	100%

[a] Underscored percentages on the diagonal indicate correct classifications; the off-diagonal percentages indicate incorrect classifications.

NOTE: The overall classification accuracy (hit ratio) for all private and government newspapers is 39.1%.

TABLE 5

Discriminant Analysis Predicting Type of Newspaper Ownership

	Actual Group	Predicted Group		Actual Total
		Private (1)	Government (2)	
(1)	Private	143 (76.1%)[a]	45 (23.9%)[b]	188
(2)	Government	75 (46.9%)[c]	85 (53.1%)[d]	160
	Predicted Total	218	130	348

[a] Percentage of correct private newspaper group classification.

[b] Percentage of incorrect private newspaper group classification.

[c] Percentage of incorrect government newspaper group classification.

[d] Percentage of correct government newspaper group classification.

NOTE: The overall classification accuracy (hit ratio) for both private and government newspaper groups is 65.5%.

TABLE 6

Stepwise Logistic-Regression Analysis Explaining the Distinction, as a Dependent Variable, Between Private and Government Newspapers

Step Number	Predictor Variable Entered	Model Chi-Square[a]	p	Residual Chi-Square[b]	p
1	Your editorials speculate about national development	8.61	.0033	48.62	.0000
2	Your editorial staff is aware of various codes of journalistic ethics	17.07	.0002	40.83	.0003
3	Your editorials are based only on verifiable evidence	23.42	.0000	33.54	.0024
4	Your editorials discuss national-development needs	32.62	.0000	27.97	.0091
5	Your editorials usually support the national-development goals of federal and state governments	37.22	.0000	20.48	.0585
6	Your editorials are not based on any formal set of ethical of moral principles	42.25	.0000	16.31	.1299
7	The ethics of your editorials is usally based on journalistic preferences that depart from a fixed set of moral or ethical principles, or that set such principles aside in a given situation	46.40	.0000	11.20	.3421

[a] The df's for the model chi-square have increments of one, starting at 1.

[b] The df's for the residual chi-square have decrements of one, starting at 16.

TABLE 7

Means for Nine Newspapers on the First Three Discriminant Functions (Total N = 348)

		Dimension Labels		
		I	II	III
	Total	Governments' Development Plans	Formalism and the Nation's "Common Good"[a]	Awareness of Journalistic Ethics and its Practicality
Private Newspapers				
The Guardian	(N = 46)	-.035	-.339	-.785
The Punch	(N = 35)	-.213	-.394	-.229
Vanguard	(N = 32)	-.333	.519	-.304
Nigerian Tribune	(N = 27)	-.976	.354	-.092
National Concord	(N = 48)	.320	.753	.152
Government Newspapers				
Daily Times	(N = 47)	.975	.347	.099
New Nigerian	(N = 39)	.501	-.572	.190
Daily Sketch	(N = 41)	-1.043	-.034	.536
The Standard	(N = 33)	.248	-.773	.454

[a]Formalism is adherence to a fixed journalistic code of ethical standards.

FIGURE 1

A three-dimensional plot of differences among newspapers in reduced discriminant space